

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes made to Fig. 2. The attached sheet, which includes Figs. 1 and 2, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 1 and 2. In Fig. 2, previously omitted element 62 has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

This communication is responsive to the final Office Action mailed on September 19, 2006. Claims 1-3, 5-12 and 14-18 are pending and claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, and 15 have been amended. In view of the foregoing amendments, as well as the following remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in complete condition for allowance and requests reconsideration of the application in this regard.

Objection to the July 12, 2006 Amendment

Applicant has revived the language “hub” after “said polymer” in claim 1, line 4 and claim 10, line 7. This language was inadvertently deleted during the preparation of the July 12, 2006 Amendment. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection.

Drawing Objections

The Examiner objected to the drawings as failing to show reference numeral “62.” Applicant has amended Fig. 2 to add reference numeral 62 to conform the drawings to the written description. Applicant submits that no “new matter” has been added by this amendment to Fig. 2. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the drawing objection.

Disclosure Objection

As remarked above, Applicant has amended Fig. 2 to conform the drawings to the written description. Consequently, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the disclosure objection.

Specification Objection

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 10 by replacing “a plurality of portions” with “a plurality of lips” consistent with the Examiner’s suggestion on page 7 of the Office Action. In view of the clarified nomenclature, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the specification objection.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-12, and 14-17 have been amended to address the informality in claims 1 and 10. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the claim objections be withdrawn.

Rejections of Claim Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-12, and 14-17 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, 2nd Paragraph as being indefinite. As remarked above, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 10 to replace “a plurality of portions” with “a plurality of lips.” The claimed “insert flange” is labeled in Applicant’s drawings with reference numeral 42. The claimed portions or lips are labeled in Applicant’s drawings with reference numeral 44. The Examiner notes in the Office Action that “the original claims 4 and 13 call for ‘a portion’ (singular, emphasis).” Applicant responds that original claims 4 and 13 set forth that a portion of the insert flange “projects radially into each of said plurality of service ports.” Hence, the original claims 4 and 14 require that a different portion of the insert flange project radially into each of the multiple services ports. Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

Rejection of Claims Under Obviousness-Type Double Patenting

Claims 1, 5-7, 10, and 14-16 stand provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1, 7, 9, and 14 of U.S. Patent No. 6,875,113. In response, a Terminal Disclaimer for the '113 patent has been submitted by way of this Amendment to overcome the Examiner's rejection, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(c). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 5-7, 10, and 14-16 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant has made a bona fide effort to respond to each and every requirement set forth in the Office Action. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is submitted to be in complete condition for allowance and, accordingly, a timely notice of allowance to this effect is earnestly solicited. In the event that any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicant does not believe that any fees are due in connection with this submission. However, if such petition is due or any fees are necessary as a result of this communication, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any under-payment or fees associated with this communication or credit any over-payment to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,
WOOD, HERRON & EVANS, L.L.P.

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Attachments